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### ETHNIC AND CULTURAL DIVERSITY IN AUSTRALIA

#### INTRODUCTION

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As 1995 has been designated as the UN International Year of Tolerance it is appropriate to reflect on the multiculturalism of Australia and the fact that its ethnic and cultural diversity has evolved largely without the major problems encountered in some other countries.

Various measures can be used to indicate the extent and characteristics of Australia's ethnic and cultural diversity. However, they are far from straightforward or uncontroversial.

This article presents some of these measures as well as discussing their difficulties and limitations.

At various times different countries seek, through population censuses, to measure ethnic and cultural diversity in terms of birthplace, language, religion and the like. The Indian Census, based on the most multicultural major society in the world, measures language, religion and caste. All are the basis for official policies aimed at equitable distribution of power and resources. The United Kingdom Census, in contrast, measures language use only for Welsh and Scottish Gaelic and religion only for Northern Ireland. British attempts to measure ethnicity based on recent immigration have been frustrated by political objections. A substitute measure of 'households headed by those born in the New Commonwealth with Pakistan' has been substituted. Birthplace data has also been used in the United Kingdom over many years. In Canada and the United States at various times measures of race, language use or ethnic origin have all been incorporated into census data.

In Australia, as elsewhere, what is measured by the census is determined by political and sometimes administrative imperatives, rather than by the intrinsic or long-term interest of the data in isolation. During the operation of the White Australia Policy between 1901 and 1966, the census recorded in great detail all those of non-European or partly non-European race. Such information is no longer recorded. In 1933, after a small influx of southern Europeans, a census question was inserted on knowledge of English. So few spoke any other language that the question was dropped until 1976. As immigrant settlement and much welfare and educational policy is now based on language needs, this information has become much more important for official purposes than it was in 1933. It is probable that in response to user demand a language question will become a permanent feature of the Australian Census as about 15 per cent of the population now normally uses a language other than English in the home.

Because of rather different priorities, a voluntary religious question has been in most Australian censuses since colonial times. Immigration policy was generally based on balancing the English, Scots and Irish, and Protestants and Catholics, in the proportions in which they occurred in the

British Isles. Most nineteenth century Australians subscribed to one denomination or another and most social welfare and much education was delivered through these denominations. Australia thus has the best recorded history of religious variety of any English-speaking society. In the United States an interpretation of the Constitution has prohibited any questioning of religion in the census. As a bizarre result most American Jews appear as of 'Russian' ethnicity, which is rather ironic as their ancestors were usually fleeing from Russian persecution. In Great Britain only one religious census has been held, in 1851. Perhaps because it showed a crisis in attendance and church capacity for the established Church of England in the new urban areas, it was never repeated.

In recent Australian censuses, compulsory questions have been asked on birthplace and language, while the question on religion has always been optional. In 1986 a question on 'ancestry' was also asked, bringing out the interesting fact that almost 40 per cent of Australians described themselves as 'English' while only half that proportion saw themselves as 'Australians'. This question was similar to one previously asked in Canada and the United States. It was useful for locating ethnic groups which are not tied to a single birthplace, such as Chinese, or those forming a minority within a particular birthplace, such as Maoris. It was less useful in locating those of Celtic origin, such as Scots and Irish, many of whom preferred to call themselves 'Australian'.

Because of a clause in the Constitution (section 127), data on full-blood Aborigines was not collected until after the deletion of this section by referendum in 1967, as opposed to people of mixed Aboriginal origin, who were included in the census. This amendment is often wrongly credited with giving Aborigines citizenship or the vote, which it did not. It did allow a much more sophisticated analysis of the Aboriginal population than hitherto, laying the basis for further public policy over a range of functions.

### **Difficulties in Locating Ethnicity**

The traditional questions in Australian censuses on religion and birthplace present only limited problems of interpretation. Many states have changed their boundaries over time, most recently those previously making up the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia. Thus most of those categorised as 'Austrians' in pre-1914 censuses were of Croatian ethnicity and came from the Austrian-ruled Dalmatian coast. Other subject areas, such as Poland or Ukraine, appear as birthplaces because respondents have declared them as such. Birthplace data is not a substitute for ethnicity data. Most Italians in Australia were born in Italy, but many Greeks were born outside Greece, for example. The majority of Chinese Australians were not born in China but in Hong Kong or other South East Asian states.

In the past most Australians declared adherence to a denomination, usually Protestant or Catholic. Religious data was of great interest to the churches and also to educational and welfare agencies. More recently there has been an expansion of non-Christian denominations where the notion of denominational exclusiveness may not be so rigid. Many Chinese, for example, may not state a religion because they do not adhere to a particular temple but worship within the home. More importantly, the numbers declaring 'no religion' or not answering, have increased to a quarter of all respondents. Religious data can be used, with care, in tracing remote ancestry (such as German Lutherans) or ethnicities which are coterminous with religions, such as Sikhs or Jews. The most important change in recent years has been the replacement of Anglicans by Catholics as the largest single denomination. Such data has never indicated active adherence, nor does it now.

Birthplace and religious data is useful in measuring likely ethnic strength and concentration, especially in the first generation of immigrants. There is a tendency in Australia, as elsewhere, for organisations representing groups to exaggerate their numerical followings in order to gain political significance or to impress funding agencies. Hard census data counters this and provides

a base for rational measurement of services and entitlements. This does not prevent interested parties from questioning the census process itself. Claims that respondents are 'afraid' to call themselves, for example, Muslims or Macedonians may well be true in limited cases. But the overall picture is reasonably sound, and certainly as much so as in any other census system.

Birthplace data in itself does not tell us much about the ethnic background of those who were born in Australia. As a normal immigration pattern is for arrivals to be in their mid-twenties and to produce most of their children after arrival, this presents problems in assessing the dimensions of ethnic groups. The Australian Census also asks details of parental birthplaces and this can be used to measure the size of the second generation. In 1991 there were 1,107,119 born in the United Kingdom, but a further 1,417,164 with one or both parents born in the United Kingdom. The longer resident a migration 'wave' has been, the larger the second generation proportion of the total ethnic group. The second generation outnumbers the first for Italian and Greek birthplaces but is outnumbered by the first for Yugoslav and Viet Nam birthplaces. As assimilation and language loss is more marked in the Australian-born, such information is relevant in assessing the likely needs of an ethnic group.

Birthplace data must always be modified by other information if a meaningful analysis of ethnicity is being attempted. Of major birthplace groups, New Zealand is at least 12 per cent Maori and Polynesian, Yugoslavia has fallen into its component ethnicities, Viet Nam has sent a large Chinese migrant contingent as have Malaysia and Singapore. Arrivals from the Lebanon (68,787 first and 67,453 second generation in 1991) may be Catholics, Orthodox, Shi'a Muslims, Sunni Muslims, Druze or Armenians, each with differing loyalties and orientations. Those from India have, until recently, been mostly English-speaking Christian Anglo-Indians, with many of those speaking Hindi coming from Fiji. There are very few sources of Australian immigrants which are not ethnically mixed. Moreover, it is common for minorities to emigrate, often to escape persecution. Only a handful from Iraq are Arab Muslims while the great majority are Christians.

Changes in the classification procedures for the 1991 Census led to the widest range of birthplaces and religions yet recorded. The major (over 20,000) birthplaces of those born overseas, and their second generation, are set out in the following table.

**TABLE 1 BIRTHPLACES AND SECOND GENERATION(a) OF PEOPLE WITH MAIN ENGLISH-SPEAKING(b) AND NON-ENGLISH SPEAKING ORIGINS, 1991**

Country	First generation	Second generation
<b>MAIN ENGLISH SPEAKING ORIGINS</b>		
United Kingdom	1,107,119	1,417,164
New Zealand	264,094	167,249
Ireland	51,642	95,168
South Africa	49,009	23,034
United States of America	43,783	31,945
Papua New Guinea(c)	23,576	10,886
Canada	22,502	17,029

## NON-ENGLISH SPEAKING ORIGINS

Italy	253,332	326,989
Yugoslavia	160,479	120,671
Greece	136,028	150,913
Viet Nam	121,813	25,105
Germany	111,975	137,621
Netherlands	94,692	139,567
China	77,799	28,580
Philippines(c)	73,144	22,587
Malaysia	71,665	23,103
Lebanon	68,787	67,453
Poland	68,496	53,161
India(c)	60,598	36,801
Hong Kong	57,510	14,330
Malta	53,858	76,588
Sri Lanka(c)	37,263	12,262
Egypt	33,140	29,017
Indonesia	32,688	14,966
Fiji	30,100	11,678
Turkey	27,770	14,659
Hungary	27,046	24,273
Chile	24,042	7,137
Singapore(c)	24,021	9,537
Cyprus	22,031	20,157
Austria	21,586	25,642
Korea	20,383	2,514

(a) Second generation includes those with one or both parents born in that country.

(b) Limited to countries of first generation over 20,000.

(c) A majority of settlers from these countries use English as their home language. In the case of Papua New Guinea the majority are of Australian or European origin.

Source: Census of Population and Housing.

The above table indicates that those arriving in Australia from the 'older' migration countries have already produced a considerable second generation. Such groups include those from the United

Kingdom, Italy, Greece, Germany, the Netherlands, Malta, Ireland and Austria. In all of these the second generation outnumbers the first. This reflects the fact that under the restrictive immigration policy in place before 1975 admissions were largely restricted to Europeans. It also reflects the decline in such admissions caused by rising living standards in Europe and the replacement of such intakes by those from Asia once this became possible. Among smaller groups where the second generation outnumbers the first, are those coming as refugees after World War II, including Latvians, Ukrainians, Lithuanians and Estonians.

Birthplaces on a regional basis is another way of illustrating shifts in the origins of the population since 1975. Table 2 shows birthplaces on a regional basis by percentage of the total population.

**TABLE 2 NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF THE TOTAL POPULATION BORN IN EACH REGION IN 1971, 1986 AND 1991[**

Region	1971		1986		1991	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
Australia	10,026,244	78.6	12,110,457	77.6	12,725,162	75.5
Oceania	97,927	0.8	264,421	1.7	351,464	2.1
United Kingdom & Ireland	1,088,210	8.5	1,127,196	7.2	1,174,860	7
Southern Europe	669,450	5.2	670,002	4.3	662,331	3.9
USSR/ Rest of Europe	453,085	3.6	448,247	2.9	462,454	2.7
North America	42,873	0.3	62,819	0.4	75,067	0.4
Latin America	12,879	0.1	53,640	0.3	71,955	0.4
Africa (a)	33,709	0.3	77,914	0.5	99,058	0.6
Southern Asia	39,960	0.3	84,305	0.5	110,494	0.7
East Asia	28,113	0.2	88,293	0.6	199,515	1.2
South East Asia	38,440	0.3	240,560	1.5	377,844	2.2
Middle East(a)	44,352	0.3	129,984	0.8	167,587	1.0
<b>Total(b)</b>	<b>12,755,638</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>15,602,279</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>16,850,334</b>	<b>100.0</b>

(a) Africa excludes Egypt; Middle East includes Egypt.

(b) Includes unstated birthplaces.

Source: Bureau of Immigration Research Statistics Section (1993), (author's calculations).

## Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Groups

Birthplace has been collected in Australian censuses since 1871 and was produced for British and a few other birthplaces well before that. Indicators of ethnic origin were also provided for non-Europeans until 1966 and have been published for Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders since 1971. There is a wealth of information about non-Europeans although much of it is based on racial categories which many social scientists would now regard as very dubious. Because of the historic obsession with race those of mixed descent were also classified as such although they may have been culturally quite assimilated to the Anglo-Australian mainstream. Indigenous people choosing to identify themselves as having Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin are so classified in recent census enumerations. Perhaps partly because they are based on self-identification, Aboriginal (and particularly Torres Strait Islander) counts have been volatile in recent censuses, although this is much less apparent in the latest census. New Zealand has followed the same path in enumerating Maoris under the Maori Affairs (Amendment) Act of 1974. The definition of indigenous peoples becomes very important when a special legal or constitutional status is extended to them. In New Zealand, Maoris have been entitled to four members of parliament since 1867. In Australia, Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders form the constituency for elections to the regional level of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission.

No other ethnic minorities in Australia now have the special status of indigenous people nor do they suffer under the legal discrimination which non-Europeans experienced in the past. Their definition is thus mostly of concern to themselves and has no legal implications. However, many services are now delivered on an 'ethnic-specific' basis under the Commonwealth Access and Equity approach which seeks to equalise opportunities to enjoy public provision. In this delivery, language is usually taken as the most important 'barrier' to equity. However, 'cultural barriers' are often mentioned in official formulations, though rarely spelled out very specifically. As already argued, birthplace is often an inadequate measure of ethnicity. Most societies are multicultural and those emigrating to Australia are frequently drawn from ethnic minorities in their own birthplace. Moreover, many ethnic groups have large diasporas, of which the most extensive are those of British, Irish or Chinese origin.

The size of an ethnic group can never be definitively determined because the concept of an ethnic group is elastic. There is an element of choice in immigrant situations where the only division is between citizens and non-citizens. Once Australia abandoned racial classification of immigrants, which it finally did in 1973, there was no official reason for delimiting ethnic groups.

Birthplace became an unsatisfactory surrogate for ethnicity, to be joined by religion in many cases and, from 1976, by language. To illustrate varying definitions of an ethnic group, some 1991 figures of birthplace, religion and language are given in the following table.

**TABLE 3 MEASURES OF SELECTED ETHNICITIES IN 1991: BIRTHPLACE, RELIGION AND LANGUAGE ('000)**

Ethnicity	Birthplace		Religion		Language	
Italian	Italy	253	n.a.		Italian	419
Greek	Greece	136	Greek Orthodox	357	Greek	286

Chinese	China & Hong Kong	135	n.a.		Chinese	262
Vietnamese	Viet Nam	122	Buddhist	137	Viet	110
Polish	Poland	69	n.a.		Polish	67
Indian	India	61	Hindu	43	Indian languages	39
German	Germany	112	n.a.		German	113
Maltese	Malta	54	n.a.		Maltese	53
Dutch	Netherlands	95	n.a.		Dutch	47
Turkish	Turkey	28	Muslim	147	Turkish	42
Jewish(a)	n.a.		Jews	73	Yiddish	10
Arabic	Arabian States	120	Muslim	147	Arabic	163

(a)The largest number of Jews were born in Australia and the largest number spoke English as their mother tongue.

NOTE: n.a. indicates that a characteristic is shared with too many others to be useful, for example, Catholicism.

Source: Census of Population and Housing.

Clearly there are many different dimensions to ethnicity. Even an attempt at tabulation of measures, as above, raises many difficulties. Nor does the 1991 Census ask for self-identification, other than for Aborigines. However, in a single departure, the 1986 Census followed American and Canadian precedent in asking respondents to nominate their ancestry, allowing for dual ethnicities such as Anglo-Indian or Greek-Australian. Results were tabulated on the basis of the first ethnicity in a dual definition. This resulted in various major proportions as shown in the following table.

**TABLE 4 MOST COMMONLY REPORTED ANCESTRIES IN 1986**

Ancestry	Number	Per cent
English(a)	5,561,563	35.6
Australian	2,905,824	18.6
Italian	507,186	3.3
Irish(a)	377,590	2.4
Scottish(a)	339,795	2.2
Greek	293,020	1.9
British'(a)	285,119	1.8

English-Irish(a)	258,857	1.7
German	233,320	1.5
Australian-English(a)	194,288	1.2
English-Scottish(a)	183,008	1.2
Chinese	172,483	1.1
Aboriginal	153,012	1.0
Dutch	149,687	1.0
All others(b)	3,987,404	25.4

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(a)'Anglo-Celtic'.

(b)Includes 'Not stated' (6.8%).

Source: Census of Population and Housing.

This attempt to get Australians to nominate their ancestry showed that over 46 per cent classed themselves as 'Anglo-Celtic', including a considerable number of English, Irish and Scottish mix. To these might be added most who called themselves simply 'Australian'. This gives an 'Anglo-Australian' total of about two-thirds of the population. One mystery in the figures is the low percentage prepared to call themselves Irish or Scottish. It is probable that many of these preferred to be Australian, as calculations by Dr Charles Price, the leading expert in ethnic composition, estimated that 17 per cent of the population were of Irish and 12 per cent of Scottish descent in 1988. The figures for other ancestries, including small groups, were much closer to Dr Price's estimates. It seems from the 1986 figures that Australians of British or Irish descent, who make up by far the largest component of the population, do not attach much significance to their ancestry, while those from non-British minorities are more precise. This, at least, is what common sense would suggest. It is also clear that those who decry the term 'Anglo-Celtic' are overlooking a large part of the population which does descend from mixtures of the English, Scottish and Irish settlers of the past.

## Ethnic Concentrations

In all societies there is a tendency for immigrant and ethnic minority groups to concentrate in particular areas. These are often wrongly termed 'ghettos', suggesting isolation from the majority, poor and even criminal characteristics and undesirability. However, there are few recent instances of such deprived concentrations in Australia, compared, for example, with the situation in the United States or the United Kingdom. Immigrants to Australia have been carefully selected although social deprivation can be found amongst many refugees and some relatives of previous settlers. There are few slum areas in Australian cities comparable to those found in Europe and North America, and none comparable to those found in the rest of the world. The worst housing and living conditions are those of Aborigines in rural and outback areas, which are often far worse than for any other identifiable group in Australian society. This low incidence of slum ghettos reflects the relative affluence of Australia since the 1880s and the newness of much housing. There are, undeniably, suburbs of relative deprivation on the outskirts of the major cities. These are not necessarily inhabited by ethnic minority groups.

Australians have a long history of opposition to 'ghettos' which can be traced back for over a century. Certainly, on the goldfields the large Chinese populations had often been confined to certain areas by official decree. But when a group of destitute Italians arrived in New South Wales in 1881, they were told by the New South Wales Government that there could be no public

assistance for them if they sought to settle together: 'the customs of the country and other circumstances render it undesirable, indeed almost impossible, for them to settle down altogether in one locality. Even if this were practicable it would not be for their own good to do so'. (Address to the Italian Immigrants, Sydney, 21st April 1881).

The Irish were believed to concentrate in urban ghettos, as they had done so in the United States and Britain. However, inspection of nineteenth century census data suggests that most Irish lived in rural areas until the 1890s. There were only a small number of metropolitan concentrations in areas such as Surry Hills and Paddington in Sydney or North Melbourne or Richmond in Melbourne. Even in those areas there was always a considerable mixing of British immigrant origins. The only areas with a Catholic majority were small rural settlements such as Boorowa (New South Wales) and Koroit (Victoria). A stronger ethnic concentration in rural areas was of Germans in South Australia. Until the implementation of the White Australia Policy in 1901, there were strong concentrations of Chinese and Pacific Islanders in parts of North Queensland.

The German Lutheran villages of South Australia represent almost the only survival of these nineteenth century concentrations, along with the Chinatowns of Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane. More recent rural settlements began to develop from the early twentieth century, although they were always limited by the itinerant character of many immigrant workers. Italians have been the most numerous non-British settlers, shaping the character of several sugar towns in North Queensland (such as Ingham), in the Murrumbidgee Irrigation Area (Griffith) and along the Murray (Cobram). Other small groups concentrating before World War II included Albanians around Shepparton (Victoria) and Croatians in the Swan Valley (Western Australia). These small settlements were strengthened after the War, with the beginning of the immigration program in 1947. Subsequent settlements were also mainly of southern Europeans, though there was some Dutch settlement in areas such as northern Tasmania, King Island and in Gippsland.

It was in the cities that very large concentrations began to build up after 1947, reviving once again dormant fears of 'ghettos'. Earlier concentrations of Jews had existed for many years, especially in St Kilda, Carlton and Caulfield in Melbourne and in Bondi in Sydney. Because of the impact of White Australia, the Chinatowns were dying out though there has been a continuous Chinese presence in Little Bourke Street, Melbourne for 140 years. A small Lebanese community had its centre in Redfern, Sydney, but many of its members were hawkers and shopkeepers in rural areas, as were many Chinese and Jews. Otherwise, Australian cities were very monocultural apart from the divide between Catholics and Protestants. Even that division was not very clear cut, although Protestants tended to be concentrated by the 1940s in middle class areas such as Camberwell in Melbourne or the North Shore in Sydney, while Catholics were more commonly found in working class areas.

These settlements were usually very small but aroused hostile comment because of their visibility. The displaced person arrivals from 1947 did not form such visible communities. They were initially housed in rural camps such as Bonegilla, Bathurst or Greta (New South Wales) or in construction camps for public works such as the hydro-electric schemes of Tasmania or the Snowy Mountains. Although they eventually tended to settle in particular suburbs, they did not do so in large enough numbers to attract attention. Nor did they develop visible commercial centres comparable to the Chinatowns or the small Italian shopping centres in Carlton (Melbourne) or Leichhardt (Sydney).

Most of these small settlements provided a nucleus for much larger concentration as the post-1947 immigration program got under way. But this proved to be a temporary phase. While Italians initially settled in Leichhardt and Carlton, they soon spread outwards, with much larger populations eventually to be found in the Drummoyne area of Sydney and the Coburg area of Melbourne. New areas opened up, including those close to migrant hostels in the big cities, though not in most rural areas. This became particularly important as these hostels were increasingly limited to refugees from countries which had no previous major presence in Australia. The location of hostels was very important in establishing the Vietnamese communities in

Cabramatta (Sydney), Springvale and Footscray (Melbourne), Darra (Brisbane) and Woodville (Adelaide).

Most postwar non-British immigrants have gone initially into industrial employment and many have stayed there. Consequently, the largest communities are based on industrial suburbs. These often develop a multicultural character, rather than being dominated by one or even a few ethnic groups. Most important in this development have been the so-called 'green field' industrial sites to the west of Melbourne and Sydney. Similar sites to the north and south of Adelaide attracted mainly British migrants, who were given special concession in the allocation of public housing in the 1950s and 1960s. More typically, British migrants, like the Dutch and Germans, gravitated to the new outer residential suburbs on the opposite fringe from industrial development, especially in eastern and bayside Melbourne, the Sydney North Shore and the south-eastern suburbs of Perth.

The stages of settlement vary in the major cities. As the metropolitan city with the lowest proportion of non-British migrants, Brisbane showed an older pattern of concentration in the inner suburbs of West End (Greek), Fortitude Valley (Chinese) and Newstead (Italian). This was broken by Vietnamese settlement around the Wacol migrant camp and by Aboriginal concentration in the public housing of Inala. Newcastle, another major city with a small migrant population, shows a similar pattern with concentrations in the older areas such as Hamilton. Elsewhere there is a very wide spread in working class suburbs, with a developing settlement in some important middle-class areas as well. The Jewish population of Australia is very heavily concentrated in middle-class areas such as Caulfield and St Kilda in Melbourne and Waverley and Ku-ring-gai in Sydney. The larger Muslim population, in contrast, lives overwhelmingly in industrial areas such as Canterbury and Auburn in Sydney or Brunswick and Coburg in Melbourne.

Bearing these variations in mind, the normal settlement patterns for non-British migrants follow three stages: firstly, settlement in inner-city areas or near migrant hostels; secondly, movement outwards along public transport routes; and thirdly, dispersal into more middle-class areas particularly for the younger generation. Some ethnic groups, most notably the Maltese, have settled in and remain in, outer industrial suburbs with little movement. Some, like the Dutch and Germans rarely passed through the first stage but went directly to outer residential suburbs. Many Chinese students settle near universities while middle-class Hong Kong and Japanese migrants go directly to middle-class suburbs. But the bulk of immigrants from southern Europe, Indochina, the Middle East and Latin America, follow the stages outlined above. Institutions and shopping centres tend to lag behind residential movement, so that the main Italian shopping centres are still Lygon Street, Carlton or Norton Street, Leichhardt. More recently arrived groups such as the Vietnamese still live close to their commercial and institutional centres in suburbs such as Cabramatta or Bankstown in Sydney or Richmond, Springvale and Footscray in Melbourne.

The concentration of various groups can be gauged by figures for local government areas in the major cities (and by Statistical Local Areas in the unified City of Brisbane). Some of the largest concentrations are of British migrants in suburbs such as Elizabeth, Salisbury, Tea Tree Gully and Noarlunga in Adelaide or Armadale, Kalamunda, Gosnells and Wanneroo in Perth. But these attract little attention and they are not included in the following table which is based on language use. The Dutch, Germans, Chinese, Filipinos, Indians and Sri Lankans are widely distributed in residential suburbs. The most concentrated Chinese groups are those from Viet Nam who often settle in the same areas as Vietnamese, which other Chinese do not. Aborigines in Sydney, Brisbane, Adelaide and Perth tend to be found on the outskirts, particularly in areas with public housing. Like many other ethnic groups they often have social centres in the inner-city but do not necessarily live close to these.

**TABLE 5 LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREAS OR CENSUS DISTRICTS (BRISBANE) WITH OVER 45 PER CENT USING A LANGUAGE OTHER THAN ENGLISH (LOTE) AT HOME IN 1991**

LGA/CD	% LOTE	Main LOTE	%	Second main LOTE	%
Sydney					
Fairfield	63.2	Vietnamese	9.8	Chinese	8.7
Canterbury	60.4	Arabic	14.2	Greek	13.0
Marrickville	55.5	Greek	11.3	Chinese	6.1
Ashfield	52.5	Italian	11.9	Chinese	11.5
Botany	51.9	Greek	10.5	Spanish	6.3
Burwood	51.2	Chinese	10.7	Arabic	7.0
Rockdale	45.0	Greek	10.2	Arabic	6.3
Sydney(a)	46.1	Chinese	10.0	Japanese	2.6
Auburn	59.4	Arabic	12.0	Chinese	10.2
Melbourne					
Sunshine	58.7	Maltese	8.3	Italian	5.8
Keilor	50.1	Italian	12.6	Maltese	5.6
Footscray	51.6	Vietnamese	10.4	Italian	5.8
Whittlesea	51.0	Italian	15.5	Macedonian	11.2
Coburg	49.8	Italian	20.4	Arabic	6.4
Brunswick	54.1	Italian	15.8	Greek	11.7
Preston	46.8	Italian	18.6	Greek	8.1
Northcote	46.2	Greek	15.4	Italian	11.5
Richmond	47.6	Greek	10.8	Chinese	10.5
Oakleigh	50.4	Greek	15.0	Italian	7.9
Adelaide					
Thebarton	45.6	Greek	22.2	Italian	11.6
Brisbane					
Darra-Sumner	53.5	Vietnamese	28.0	Polish	4.9

(a) Sydney has a very high 'Not stated' group.

Note: Percentages are for the population five years and older. Total LOTE includes 'Not stated'.

Source: Census of Population and Housing.

The potential political impact of such heavy migrant concentrations has yet to show much result at the national level, although it is apparent in some State Parliaments. A ranking of federal electorates with over one-quarter of Non-English Speaking Background (NESB 1) people, the southern European-born and South East Asian-born percentage is given in the following table.

**TABLE 6 SELECTED FEDERAL ELECTORATES SHOWING THE PERCENTAGE OF NON-ENGLISH SPEAKING BACKGROUND, SOUTHERN EUROPEAN-BORN AND SOUTH EAST ASIAN-BORN IN 1991 (per cent)**

Electorate	NESB1	Southern European-born	South East Asian-born
Fowler	44.5	8.4	19.6
Grayndler	39.0	13.4	7.2
Watson	38.6	13.1	5.2
Prospect	37.7	11.4	10.0
Maribyrnong	35.9	20.5	5.6
Hotham	35.7	11.2	10.2
Blaxland	34.6	8.0	7.8
Reid	34.2	5.4	6.7
Gellibrand	33.8	14.5	9.4
Lowe	31.0	12.1	3.0
Kingsford-Smith	30.6	8.0	6.3
Melbourne	30.5	9.2	10.0
Holt	30.4	8.1	4.9
Calwell	30.2	14.5	3.0
Wills	29.0	17.0	1.7
Batman	28.8	18.2	2.7
Scullin	28.3	20.5	2.2
Barton	27.5	11.7	2.6

Note: Percentages are of total population, not electors.  
Source: Kopras (1993); Tables 20, 21 and 22.

These electorates were all won by the Australian Labor Party in 1993, except for Wills, which was held by an Independent having previously been represented by Prime Minister Bob Hawke. Lowe was won from the Liberals. All these electorates are in Sydney (9) or Melbourne (9). Despite their ethnic composition, only one (Calwell) is represented by an MP born in a non-English-speaking country.

## Managing Diversity

The ethnic diversification of Australia over the past 50 years has caused few serious social problems. The serious social disadvantages of Aboriginal people have had more political impact and attracted more programs and funding than those of immigrants, where the largest public expenditures have been on teaching English. The main problem has been encountered in recent years by those unable to speak English and finding it difficult to gain employment in a high unemployment economy. This problem was not faced in the same way by arrivals before 1975 except in short-lived depressions. Another problem has been the persistence of xenophobic attitudes often traceable to Australia's past, and particularly opposition to Asian immigration. A further issue has been public scepticism about multiculturalism and especially about periodic disputes between a small number of organised ethnic groups.

To deal with such issues all Australian governments, national, State and Territory, have adopted multicultural policies and set up relevant institutions. Among the most important of these have been the Office of Multicultural Affairs, created within the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet in 1987. State Governments have set up ethnic affairs commissions in most cases or allocated resources for equivalent sub-departments. The Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs retains a responsibility for funding ethnic-specific welfare agencies and migrant resource centres. A major institution has been the Special Broadcasting Service, whose multilingual television coverage has recently been expanded outside the capital cities. All these provisions are designed to maintain social harmony and to integrate ethnic groups within Australian society on the basis of tolerance and citizenship. The absence of serious social conflict suggests that this strategy has been a success, although the control and planning of immigration is an important factor, as is the absence of other major social tensions in Australian society.

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